

Neighborhood WATCH

*A Community Action
and Problem-Solving Program*



What is Neighborhood Watch?



Neighborhood Watch is a police department coordinated **community action and problem-solving program**. The program uses the idea of team spirit and good neighborly behavior to address problems that concern you in your neighborhood. Fortunately you can find good neighbors everywhere.

Neighborhood Watch is ***not a guard duty***. Simply, you and your neighbors take control of your neighborhood by forming community relationships.

The police department will teach you and your neighbors to communicate, use resources and work as a team. Your team will learn to problem-solve and use available resources to resolve community concerns. Finally, the police department will guide your group through a discussion, creating a plan to resolve neighborhood problems. As a participant you will . . .

- Get to know your neighbors and build a neighborhood team
- Learn how to work together
- Develop strategies for communicating
- Identify and discuss neighborhood problems
- Develop a plan of action to resolve problems
- Learn how to work with community resources like the Police
- Learn about crime statistics and crime prevention

**Start your Neighborhood Watch Program today
and take control of your neighborhood!**

Starting Your Neighborhood Watch Program

1. Start your Neighborhood Watch program by **calling the Carlsbad Police Department** for assistance. *If you have already spoken with the Crime Prevention Specialist (931-2105), move on to step 2.*



2. Define your Neighborhood Watch group, also called a **Neighborhood Watch Block**.

A **Neighborhood Watch block** is the group of 12 to 20 homes that surround you. The purpose is to divide the area into a reasonably managed group, making it easier for neighbors to define responsibilities and get to know each other. This is a nationally defined number so please keep the blocks in this range.

If you are part of a homeowners association, you might consider organizing the whole association into one **Neighborhood Watch District**. A Neighborhood Watch District is a group of Neighborhood Watch blocks. The number of blocks within your district depends on how many homes there are in your association. Consult with the police department's Crime Prevention Specialist (931-2105) if you need assistance.

3. Next, *at least one person per Neighborhood Watch Block* (group of 12-20 homes) needs to volunteer to be the Neighborhood Watch **Block Captain**. The Block Captain leads the activities of the group and acts as the group's liaison with the police department and other community resources. If you are organizing a district of blocks, **the police department will assist each block individually**. Now, give the new Block Captain the "Neighborhood Watch Guide."



Individual **Block Captains take over** from this point.

Block Captains



1. Your first duty as the new Block Captain is to **personally introduce yourself**, talking with a member of each home within your assigned Neighborhood Watch Block. The purpose is to share information about the Neighborhood Watch Program and gain the resident's support and participation in the program. You can use the front page of this guide to explain the program.

Your goal is 100% participation.

2. While you are with your neighbor, distribute the Neighborhood Watch **Assessment Survey**.

You get the survey from the Crime Prevention Specialist at 931-2105. The survey gathers important information about your Neighborhood and will be used by the Police Department to personalize and facilitate your first Neighborhood Watch meeting. Ask participants to fill out the survey and tell them how to return it to you. Let them know this is their opportunity to be part of this worthwhile community program and have their voice heard!

You will need to return the survey to the Crime Prevention Specialist before the first meeting.

3. Ask your neighbors **what day would be best** for them to participate in the first Neighborhood Watch meeting. The Crime Prevention Specialist facilitates meetings on **Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday evening at 6p.m.** Generally, three weeks advanced notice is needed.
4. **Now, schedule your first Neighborhood Watch Meeting.** Call the police department's Crime Prevention Specialist at 931-2105 and schedule the date. Also, make arrangements to return the assessment surveys.
5. Share the meeting date with your neighbors and ask them to **mark their calendars**. The Crime Prevention Specialist will send you **meeting invitations** to give to your neighbors. Notify your neighbors immediately and re-notify your neighbors just before the meeting.

☐ Now it is time for your first meeting.

☐ Did you return the surveys to the Crime Prevention Specialist?



Preparing for Your First Neighborhood Watch Meeting

1. Before your meeting, draw a **map** that shows your Neighborhood Watch Block. This will give participants a visual image of their Neighborhood Watch block and a quick reference to group information. Include:
 - a. The **street** including its name and **a square for each house** on your Neighborhood Watch block even if they do not want to participate.
 - b. Write on each square house on the map the **name, address and phone number** of the resident. For non-participants just put the name on the house if it is available.
 - c. Make a **copy of the map** for each block participant and hand it out at the first meeting.
2. **Remind your neighbors** about the meeting. Ask that your neighbors RSVP for the meeting and a day or two before the meeting remind them again.
3. Consider offering **simple refreshments** such as cookies and coffee. Allow neighbors to help you. Ask for volunteers to do some of these tasks. If you want to be more elaborate, have a potluck before the meeting. *Please, **no alcohol** unless you serve it after the meeting.*
4. Provide and distribute **nametags**. Remember you want your neighbors get to know each other. This is a perfect tool. Have neighbors *write their name and street number* on the tag or you could do it for them in advance.
5. Have an **attendance sheet** available and assign someone the task of taking **meeting notes**. This will help you track who was at the meeting and whom you need to contact with the meeting's information. You will want to print the meeting notes so everyone can understand the group's plan for action.



A special note about **children**: A meeting about crime and neighborhood problems is not a good environment for children. The best idea for families with children is to have one parent stay home with the children or perhaps get a babysitter. Even if the neighborhood children are sent to a family room to watch TV during the meeting, they seldom stay there. They want their parent's attention, making it difficult for others to concentrate on the topic at hand.

Please do not have children at your meeting.



What to Do After Your First Meeting?

1. Print and distribute the **minutes and educational materials** gained at the first meeting. Do not forget to distribute information to those who could not attend. Even give copies of the educational materials to those who do not wish to be part of Neighborhood Watch so they can still have the prevention information.
2. Assign the task of gathering **important neighborhood information** to a participant. Consult the meeting's minutes to recall what information the group decided to collect. Remember this information helps you and your neighbors establish what is normal, thus taking action when something is suspicious. It also gives you valuable tools to help your neighbors when necessary. Examples are:

Work schedules	Work phone numbers	Child information
Vacations	Subscribed services	Vehicle information
3. **Duplicate and distribute** the important neighborhood information to all block participants.
4. Develop a formal plan for **neighborhood communication**. Consult the meeting minutes for ideas. Methods for enhancing communication are:

Newsletter	Regular social gatherings
Telephone tree	E-mail tree
5. Follow through with the **action plan** developed at the first meeting. Assign group members tasks to get the ball rolling. Set a time to check-in to see how the tasks are developing toward the neighborhood goal. Regularly let the entire group know about the plan's progress.
6. **Keep in touch** with the Crime Prevention Specialist. If you need resources, clarification or other help, do not forget to call. You should receive a newsletter from the Police Department at least four times a year. It is the Block Captain's responsibilities to make sure everyone on the block gets a copy of the newsletter.

❑ Don't do everything yourself!

❑ Get help from your neighbors and assign them tasks.